

37

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/087,660

Examiner

Thoi V. Duong

Applicant(s)

TOWLER ET AL.

Art Unit

2871

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the reply filed March 23, 2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) ~~is/are~~ 1,3-6,8-20 and 24-27.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) None
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to the Reply to Office Action filed March 23, 2007.

Claims 2, 7 and 21-23 were cancelled and claims 1, 3-6, 8-20 and 24-27 are currently pending in this application.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the title: change the title as "Nematic liquid crystal devices comprising surface protrusions formed of anisotropic material for nucleation of an active region."

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 1, 3-6, 8-20 and 24-27 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: none of the prior art of record fairly suggests or shows all of the limitations as claimed.

Specifically, re claim 1, none of the prior art of record discloses, in combination with other limitations as claimed, a liquid crystal device comprising a plurality of surface protrusions formed from an anisotropic material provided on at least one of the alignment layers, said protrusions having a height which is at least 10% of the thickness of the liquid crystal and affect alignment both near the surface and within the bulk of the

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liquid crystal, wherein said liquid crystal is divided into a plurality of pixels each having an active region, and the active region of each said pixel partially overlaps with at least one of said protrusions, so that nucleation occurs within said active region.

The most relevant reference, EP 0996028 A2 to Acosta et al. (Acosta), fails to disclose or suggest the claimed invention. As shown in Fig. 10 of Acosta, the alignment layers 2 and 2" are provided with reactive mesogen layers 8, 8' (anisotropic material) in an active region of the pixel region to affect alignment both near the surface and within the bulk of the liquid crystal 3 so that nucleation occurs within said active region (col. 14, paragraph 83); however, those layers are not surface protrusions having a height of at least 10% of the thickness of the liquid crystal.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thoi V. Duong whose telephone number is (571) 272-2292. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Nelms, can be reached at (571) 272-1787.

Thoi V. Duong - 04/08/2007

